The KT
THE KABUL TIMES DAILY
www.thekabultimes.com | twitter.com/thekabultimes | info@thekabultimes.com | facebook.com/thekabultimes
Founded in 1962
Saratan 28-1404 Saturday 19 July 2025 INo: 94-Vol: LXII

Kabul 36° Sunny | Kandahar 41° Sunny | Herat 38° Sunny | Jalalabad 39° Sunny | Mazar-e-Sharif 43° Sunny | Bamyan 23° Sunny

Prime Minister stresses dialogue over force to address challenges

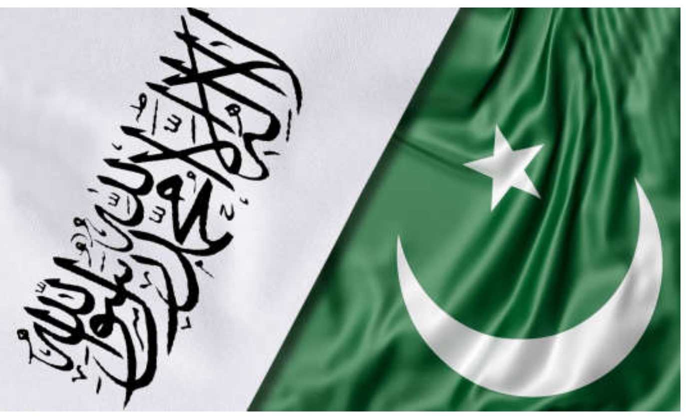
PM: Problems should be solved through dialogue, not force

KABUL: Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate, met with Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, saying that problems should be solved through dialogue, not force, according to a statement from Arg the other day.Speaking at the meeting, Mullah Hassan Akhund emphasized the importance of joint efforts in addressing challenges, especially the dignified return of Afghan refugees.

Referring to the recently signed trilateral agreement between Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan, he reaffirmed the Islamic Emirate's commitment to the successful implementation of the Trans-Afghan Railway Project.

The Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate emphasized that lasting solutions cannot be achieved through force or threats, and called for divine guidance to address challenges through goodwill, mutual cooperation, and a spirit of neighborly understanding.

Meanwhile, Ishaq Dar noted that during his recent visit to the People's Republic of China, he had encouraged Chinese officials to support the Trans-Afghan Railway Project.



He expressed hope that bilateral ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan would further strengthen, allowing future generations to live in an atmosphere of brotherhood and mutual understanding.

The Kabul Times

Supporting returnees IEA's key responsibility, Hanafi

KABUL: Mawlavi Abdul Salam Hanafi, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate for Administrative Affairs, said that ensuring security, addressing public concerns, and supporting returning migrants are key responsibilities of the Islamic Emirate, according to a statement from Arg the other day.

Speaking at a meeting with Mawlavi Abdul Rahman Haqqani, Governor of Baghlan province, Hanafi emphasized the importance of ensuring security, addressing the pressing needs of the local population, and providing comprehensive support to forcibly returned migrants.

He highlighted the Islamic Emirate's commitment to working diligently within its available resources to overcome challenges and advance development efforts in Baghlan, aiming to improve the living conditions and well-being of all residents in the province.

Governor Haqqani provided updates on the social, security, and governance situation in Baghlan and emphasized that the Mujahidin and officials of the Islamic Emirate remain committed to serving the people and work tirelessly to ensure security and peace in the province.

He also raised local concerns regarding development projects, healthcare services, job creation, and support for forcibly returned migrants from neighboring countries.

Hanafi also assured that the Islamic Emirate will take necessary actions within its capacity to resolve issues and meet the demands of the people of Baghlan.

The Kabul Times

Mujahid announces new appointments in Emirati administrations

Mawlavi Sayed Hassan Shah Agha, the former deputy director general of the Directorate of Monitoring and Supervision of Orders and Decrees of Kandahar Provinc,e has been appointed as the deputy director general of the General Directorate of Administration for Finance and Administration, he said.

KABUL: Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesman of the Islamic Emirate, said in a statement the other day that, based on the degree of the Supreme

Leader of the Islamic Emirate, Shaikh Hebatullah Akhundzada, new appointments have been made in some government administrations.

Mujahid said that Mawlavi Zia-ur-Rahman Madani, the former governor of Logar province, has been appointed as the professional deputy minister of the Ministry of Guidance, Hajj, and Religious Affairs.

The spokesman added that Mawlavi Gul Zarin, the former director general of the Ministry of Borders, Tribes, and Ethnic Affairs, has been appointed as the deputy minister of housing, construction, and zone development at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

Mawlavi Mahmood Shah Zahid, former Deputy for Finance and Administration at the Administrative Office, has been appointed as Deputy for Policy, Oversight, and Evaluation at the General Directorate of Emirati State-Owned Companies, he added.

Mawlavi Sayed Hassan Shah Agha, the former deputy director general of the Directorate of Monitoring and Supervision of Orders and Decrees of Kandahar Provinc,e has been appointed as the deputy director general of the General Directorate of Administration for Finance and Administration, he said.

Additionally, Qari Salahuddin Ayubi, the former police chief of Zabul province, has been named as the governor of Logar province. Mawlavi Qudratullah Amini, the former advisor to the Ministry of Interior, has been appointed as the deputy governor of Kabul province, Mujahid further said.

According to him, Maulavi Abdul Halim Halimi, the former district governor of Garbaz district in Khost province, will assume the role of police chief of Zabul province. Mullah Mohammad Yunus Mukhlis, the former deputy governor of Kabul province, has been appointed as an advisor to the Ministry of Interior.

Lastly, Mawlavi Jamaluddin Wahaj, the former head of the intelligence service of Uruzgan province, will serve as the security chief of the Baghlan province police headquarters, he added.

The Kabul Times

Statement of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan regarding the attacks by the Israeli regime on Syria

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan unequivocally condemns the attacks carried out by the Israeli regime on the territory of Syria, particularly in Damascus and other locations.

Such acts of aggression constitute not only a violation of the sovereignty of an independent state, but also represent a systematic crime aimed at exacerbating regional instability and perpetuating disorder.

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan calls upon influential states and regional organizations to fulfill their responsibilities in response to these transgressions, to take immediate action to halt the Israeli regime's acts of aggression, and to uphold the independence and national sovereignty of the Syrian people and their legitimate government.

Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

MoFA hosts trilateral meeting on regional connectivity, stability

KABUL: The country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on Friday that it has hosted a trilateral political consultation meeting with the foreign ministers of Uzbekistan and Pakistan in

Kabul, focusing on regional connectivity, economic cooperation, and stability.

The meeting has been held ahead of the signing of the feasibility study agreement for the Trans-Afghan Railway Project, the statement said.

During the talks, the three sides emphasized strengthening bilateral and regional ties, enhancing economic connectivity, and expanding joint trade.

Participants highlighted the need to fully utilize the region's potential through sustained cooperation to achieve long-term prosperity for their peoples. Speaking at the meeting, Mawlavi Amir Khan Muttaqi, the acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, said that the Trans-Afghan Railway would not only reinforce regional connectivity but also serve the shared interests of all three countries. He stressed that mutual benefits bring mutual responsibilities, which must be fulfilled through sincere, continued, and collective efforts.

The Uzbek and Pakistani foreign ministers expressed strong support for Afghanistan's stability and regional role, reaffirming their countries' commitment to infrastructure, trade, and transit cooperation. They acknowledged that sustained peace in Afghanistan would create a foundation for broader regional prosperity.

The meeting concluded with a joint pledge to continue political dialogue and build on the momentum for stronger trilateral engagement.

The Kabul Times

Trilateral agreement inked to initiate Trans-Afghan Railway feasibility study

KABUL: A trilateral agreement has been officially signed to initiate a feasibility study for the Trans-Afghan Railway, the Ministry of Public Works said in a statement the other day.

The agreement, signed by the country's Ministry of Public Works, Uzbekistan's Ministry of Transport, and Pakistan Railways, marks a critical step toward launching a regional connectivity megaproject linking Central and South Asia through Afghanistan, the statement said.

The signing ceremony took place in the presence of Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Mawlavi Amir Khan Muttaqi and his counterparts from Uzbekistan and Pakistan, reflecting high-level commitment from all three nations.

Under the agreement, joint technical teams from the participating countries will conduct a comprehensive feasibility study to assess the route, design, and implementation logistics of the proposed railway.

Once completed, the Trans-Afghan Railway is expected to transform trade dynamics, boost economic ties, and significantly improve regional transit infrastructure.

The Kabul Times

Haqqani, Pak Deputy PM discuss trans-Afghan railway project

KABUL: The country's acting Interior Minister Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani, in a meeting with Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, urged for strengthening practical cooperation between Kabul and Islamabad, according to a statement from the ministry on Friday. Haqqani said: "The shared values between Kabul and Islamabad should be transformed into practical cooperation."

He warmly welcomed the Pakistani official, calling their visit a significant step, particularly in light of the trilateral agreement signed between Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan for the feasibility study of the Trans-Afghan Railway project.

The acting interior minister described the agreement as a key move toward enhancing economic, trade, and transit relations among the three countries.

Highlighting the shared religious, cultural, and historical ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as mutual interests and economic opportunities, Haqqani stressed that these commonalities must serve as the foundation for practical cooperation.

In the meantime, Ishaq Dar also called the railway feasibility agreement a major breakthrough and expressed hope for stronger bilateral relations. He emphasized the need for ongoing, constructive collaboration between the two neighbors in trade, transit, security, and political understanding.

Separately, Minister Haqqani also met with Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister Bakhtiyor Saidov and discussed strengthening bilateral economic cooperation.

The Kabul Times

International Daily

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Food for thought

Today's generation guarantees our bright future

Efforts should be made for accepted traditions development

Any nation has its accepted culture and traditions and tries to preserve them against the flow of foreign, vicious and commonplace culture.

Also, culture is the identity and historical memory of a nation, and it is said that any nation is alive with its culture, and the weakness of culture can deprive society of its foundation. Any nation that cherishes its cultural heritage, language, literature, and values will always be strong, noble, and independent in its decision-making.

Our society is proud of (and needs) national and cultural figures, poets and authors, but if we want to continue this trend and produce more stars who serve culture, then we must take concrete steps for cultural development.

We must give a special place to the subjects of literature, language, history, art, and philosophy in the curricula of schools, madrasas, and universities. Men of culture and educated individuals should be included in educational materials so that new generations become familiar with, connected to, and strengthened by their cultural heritage.

Also, the value of the poet, writer, artist, and researcher should be recognized. They should be provided with material and spiritual support, awards, scholarships, and cultural events to make this sector stronger and more constructive.

The media should give priority to Islamic and national culture.

Radio, television, and social media should pay special attention to strengthening cultural values, local literature, language, traditions, and national identity. Poems, interviews, and cultural programs of poets should be the agenda of the media.

Pashto and Dari languages, which are considered the backbone of our culture, are essential for cultural survival. The social value, dialectal diversity, and literary power of languages should be recognized and managed properly.

The message should reach the people that culture is not just poetry or songs, but our speech, traditions, values, ethics, and social interactions are also part of culture. This awareness should be conveyed from school to home, from home to mosque, and from mosque to the media.

Societies of writers, poets, linguists, and artists should be established and widely supported. Libraries, exhibitions, literary evenings, and cultural gatherings at the provincial level should be continued and have a standard structure.

It should be said that if our goal is for the next generation to be the true heirs of our culture, then respecting, guiding and imitating cultural figures like the late Matiullah Turab should be our cultural policy.

Salt self-sufficiency driving Afghanistan toward economic strength

In a country like Afghanistan, where the economic structure remains fragile due to recurring crises, heavy reliance on imports, and weak industrial institutions, achieving self-sufficiency in the production of any item—especially essen-

tial goods—is not only an economic milestone but also a symbol of progress toward economic independence and resilience.

Self-sufficiency in salt production, one of the most basic yet vital commodities for any society, can provide a platform for redefining domestic production capabilities, reviving processing industries, and reducing dependency on imports.

Despite its simple appearance and low cost, salt plays a critical role in food security, the food industry, raw material processing, livestock management, medicine, and public health.

Afghanistan requires approximately 300,000 metric tons of salt annually.

According to the latest official statistics, domestic production has surpassed this figure, reaching about 344,000 metric tons per year.

This not only indicates that the country has met its domestic needs but also possesses the potential to export this vital resource—an opportunity that, with strategic planning, can contribute to foreign exchange earnings.

Currently, based on data from the Ministry of Mines, there are 12 active salt mines across 10 provinces, including Takhar, Samangan, Balkh, Faryab, Ghor, Herat, Parwan, Paktia, Ghazni, and Kandahar.

In addition, over 50 salt production and processing factories are operating in the country, providing direct and indirect employment to thousands of people.

This growth signals the formation of a salt industry value chain that could become a model for other mineral resources.

From the perspective of a resilient economy, salt self-sufficiency brings three key benefits:

First, it reduces import dependency and saves foreign currency.

Afghanistan previously imported a large portion of its salt from neighboring countries, which not only resulted in capital outflows but also exposed the supply to risks such as sanctions, currency fluctuations, and political pressures.

Domestic production can minimize these geopolitical risks.

Second, it creates sustainable and local employment in areas often plagued by high unemployment.

Salt extraction and processing do not require highly specialized skills and can generate significant employment opportunities with moderate investment.

Developing this industry, particularly in underprivileged provinces, can help curb internal migration and boost household incomes. Third, it establishes the foundation for exports and regional trade integration. With access to markets in Central Asia, Iran, Pakistan, and even the Gulf countries, Afghanistan has the potential to turn its salt into a viable export commodity, provided production quality meets international standards and adequate packaging, branding, and marketing strategies are employed. However, despite these achievements, several challenges still hinder the development of this industry. The first challenge is the lack of well-equipped laboratories for quality control and hygiene standards.

Experts believe that some of the salt available in the domestic market lacks sufficient iodine or contains harmful impurities.

This deficiency not only endangers public health but also eliminates any prospects for official exports.

The second challenge is the inadequacy of transportation infrastructure and proper packaging.

Poor road access for transporting salt from mines to production centers or consumer markets raises overall costs and reduces profitability.

Moreover, substandard and non-competitive packaging undermines the bargaining power of Afghan producers in foreign markets.

The third barrier is the lack of long-term government support policies for small and medium-sized enterprises.

While the declaration of self-sufficiency in salt is an important milestone, without legal protection for investors, import restrictions on foreign alternatives, banking facilities, and tax incentives, this achievement may quickly erode, leaving nascent industries vulnerable.

To sustain this success and turn it into a viable economic model, the government must take strategic steps:

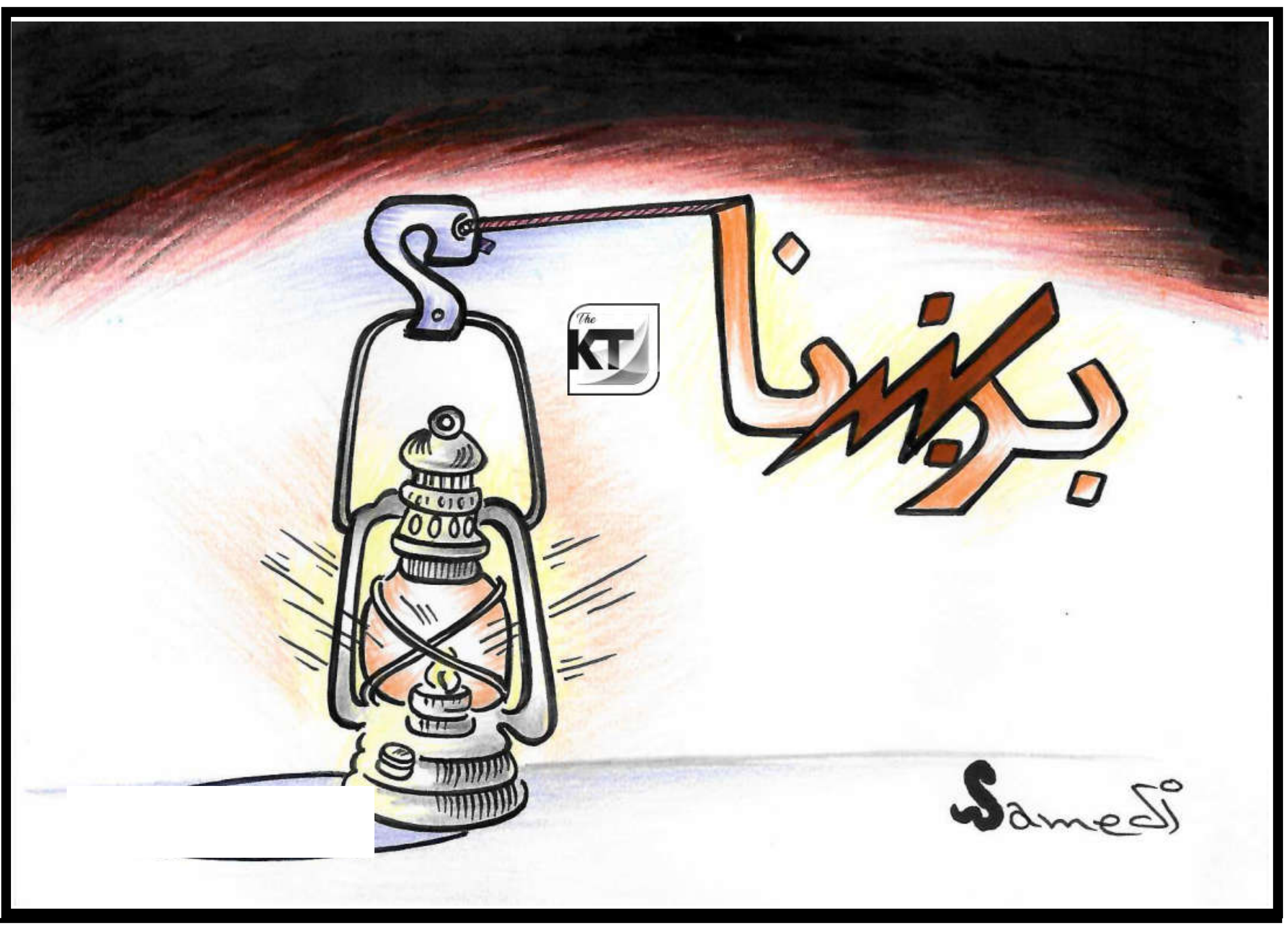
1.Develop a national roadmap for salt industry development focusing on capacity building, legal support, quality enhancement, export facilitation, and investment promotion (both domestic and foreign).

2.Establish a national laboratory for quality control and certification of salt products to ensure competitiveness in regional and global markets.

3.Provide special incentives for expanding salt processing and packaging industries to strengthen domestic value addition.

4.Train the local workforce and professionalize the extraction, processing, and marketing chain, transforming it from a traditional system into an industrial model. In conclusion, Afghanistan's experience with salt self-sufficiency has demonstrated that by relying on domestic resources, the country can reduce its dependence on imports and move toward national production. If supported with careful planning and consistent backing, this experience can serve as a foundation for achieving self-sufficiency in other sectors such as mining, agriculture, and industry. Salt production may be just one step, but it is a decisive step toward economic resilience, independence, and restoring confidence in national capabilities.

Abdul Hai Nasiri



High travel costs drive demands for roadwork in Zabul

Roads are not merely made of dirt and gravel; they are the vital arteries of social life, economic development, and public convenience.

A society equipped with safe, sustainable, and accessible roads benefits not only from improved trade and transit, but also from better opportunities in education, healthcare, market access, and social interaction.

Zabul province, located in the south of the country, despite facing many geographical challenges, holds significant importance due to its area and population. Several southern districts of this province—Shinkay, Nawbahar, Atghar, and Shamolzai—have long suffered from the lack of proper road infrastructure.

Residents of these districts say that the only road connecting them to the provincial center, Qalat, is unpaved and extremely difficult.

This poor condition not only makes daily travel hard but has also caused economic problems.

A resident of Shinkay district, Haji Akbar, calls on the Islamic Emirate to reconstruct these roads properly.

"Our demand is for this road, which is currently unpaved, to be built properly. That will bring many conveniences and pave the way for trade and transit."

Similarly, Saradar Mohammad, a resident of Shamolzai district, says people face many difficulties traveling on these roads and urges the Islamic Emirate to reconstruct them fundamentally.

"This is the road of four districts.

The transport fare is currently very high. Right now, we are paying 1,500 Afghanis, but if this road is built, the fare will drop to around 300 Afghanis."

Mohammad Akbar, another resident of Atghar district, also complains about the poor condition of the main road leading to the district.

He adds that dozens of vehicles from the neighboring Nawbahar district also use this road daily.

He urges the government to begin work on properly reconstructing the road.

"This is a daily challenge for the people.

Our request from the Islamic Emirate is to reconstruct this road properly, so not only will travel problems be resolved, but the distance between farms and markets will also be shortened."

Meanwhile, local officials in Zabul province say that the Islamic Emirate has started gravel-laying work on the major transit road connecting the four districts, using its own budget for about 100 kilometers.

Sediqullah Wathiq, the

spokesperson for the governor of Zabul, says the project is expected to be completed in six months. He states that this project, which costs around 30 million Afghanis, will be completed with government resources. "Based on verbal orders from the leadership and efforts by Zabul's provincial authorities, work has begun on this project to construct secondary roads to the districts of Nawbahar, Shamolzai, Atghar, and Shinkay.

According to available information, it covers about 100 kilometers and will cost around 30 million Afghanis." Some time ago, Mohammad Ashraf Haqshenas, spokesperson for the Ministry of Public Works of Afghanistan, told The Kabul Times that the survey for the reconstruction of roads in Shinkay, Nawbahar, Atghar, and Shamolzai districts had been completed, and once the budget is approved, work will begin. He stated that there are plans to build these roads in a proper and permanent way.

According to local residents, once these roads are built, agricultural and horticultural products from the region will reach the markets on time, which will in turn support economic development.

People are urging the government to upgrade the currently initiated projects into full-scale, permanent infrastructure projects so that the benefits are long-term and future generations are freed from persistent difficulties.

Ehsanullah Wolasmal

Job creation for skilled returnees should be prioritized

Job creation for skilled returnees is essential for sustainable development, social stability, and economic growth in post-return contexts like Afghanistan.

These individuals often return with valuable skills, international work experience, and a strong work ethic, making them key assets for national rebuilding.

Skilled returnees can immediately contribute to sectors such as construction, agriculture, energy, and manufacturing, accelerating infrastructure and productivity.

Rather than letting their expertise go to waste, integrating returnees into the job market taps into a ready-made talent pool that can fill gaps in the national labor force.

Providing jobs for returnees prevents frustration and economic marginalization, reducing the risk of instability and encouraging peaceful reintegration. Returnees with skills and income-generation opportunities can start businesses, support local economies, and reduce dependency on aid.

Their participation reinforces public confidence in government policies, particularly if tied to visible progress in development and reconstruction.

Therefore, to support national reconstruction and long-term stability, prioritizing job creation for skilled returnees has become a crucial component of Afghanistan's development agenda.

As thousands of Afghan migrants continue to return from neighboring countries, many with valuable technical, vocational, and professional skills, the Islamic Emirate and relevant government institutions are increasingly recognizing their potential to contribute meaningfully to the rebuilding of the country.

These returnees often bring with them years of experience in sectors such as construction, agriculture, carpentry, machinery, information technology, and small-scale manufacturing.

Their reintegration into the workforce not only helps reduce unemployment but also strengthens the domestic economy and supports rural development. Utilizing their expertise can spark innovation, improve productivity, and accelerate infrastructure projects that are essential for national growth. Senior officials, including the acting Minister of Refugees and Repatriations Mawlavi Abdul Kabir, in a recent meeting of the Employment Committee for Returnees, have emphasized the importance of engaging these skilled individuals in meaningful employment opportunities. By directing ministries such as Economy, Industry and Commerce, Agriculture, and Rural Development to prioritize returnees in public contracts and development programs, the government aims to foster inclusive growth while reducing dependency on foreign aid.

See P4

Hunger-stricken Gazans face bullets in aid distribution sites

Over the past three weeks, more than 330 Palestinians have been killed while waiting in lines to receive humanitarian aid in Gaza, according to Palestinian health officials. These deaths, resulting from direct Israeli attacks on aid distribution centers, have sparked international outrage and raised grave concerns about the use of starvation as a weapon of war.

The killings occurred at food distribution points operated by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), a controversial organization reportedly supported by both the United States and Israel.

The foundation is currently the sole entity authorized to distribute humanitarian aid in the besieged Gaza Strip, following the collapse of UN-led and independent relief efforts due to Israel's strict blockade.

The GHF, while initially introduced as a humanitarian initiative, has faced mounting criticism from both local communities and international organizations.

Its method of aid distribution has been described as "lethal" by United Nations officials, who warn that the current system violates international humanitarian standards and endangers the very people it is meant to help.

The distribution centers, often surrounded by Israeli military presence and coordinated in cooperation with U.S. and Israeli authorities, have become focal points for violence.

Numerous reports confirm that Palestinians waiting in long queues for essential supplies—such as food, water, and hygiene products—have been targeted by Israeli forces under vague security pretexts.

On June 16th alone, Israeli forces killed 50 Palestinians at one such food distribution point.

This incident marked one of the deadliest single-day assaults in the context of humanitarian relief operations since the conflict intensified.

Overall, it is estimated that an average of 16 Palestinians are killed each day while attempting to access life-saving aid.

Human rights groups have strongly condemned the use of hunger and deprivation as tools of control in Gaza. Since March 2025, Israel has completely blocked the entry of food and water into the Gaza Strip, triggering a severe humanitarian crisis.

Eleven weeks into this blockade, the GHF emerged as the only body distributing aid, a shift that many critics argue was orchestrated to control and limit the flow of resources.

According to the United Nations and several humanitarian watchdogs, the GHF's operations are deeply flawed and may be contributing to war crimes.

In scathing statements, UN officials have referred to GHF-operated centers as "death zones," asserting that they not only fail to protect civilians but actively expose them to life-threatening situations.

Some Gaza residents have gone further, describing these aid centers as "execution fields"—places where people risk being shot for the chance to receive a bag of flour or a bottle of water.

"It's a choice between hunger and a bullet," one resident reportedly said, highlighting the impossible situation faced by Gaza's civilian population.

Prior to the emergence of GHF, humanitarian assistance in Gaza was managed by a combination of United Nations agencies and independent NGOs, which employed thousands of aid workers and maintained hundreds of distribution points across the territory.

These agencies, despite operating under challenging conditions, had established a relatively efficient and transparent system for delivering food and medical supplies.

However, the intensification of the Israeli blockade and growing interference from external actors, particularly the U.S. and Israeli governments, led to the sidelining of these agencies. Many of them were denied entry permits, had their convoys targeted, or were forced to suspend operations due to security risks.

In the void left by the departure of these organizations, the GHF has assumed near-total control of food distribution—despite lacking transparency, accountability, or operational neutrality. Its close coordination with Israeli authorities has raised questions about its true purpose and legitimacy in the eyes of both Palestinians and the international community.

In addition to the accusations against GHF and Israeli forces, new reports suggest that Israel has covertly supported armed groups that have been implicated in stealing humanitarian aid.

These groups allegedly obstruct the distribution process and create additional layers of insecurity for the desperate population. If confirmed, these actions would represent a further escalation in the deliberate manipulation of humanitarian aid as a tool of war. Leading human rights organizations have called for an independent international investigation into the repeated attacks on civilians at food distribution sites.

See P4

Economic ties expand through diplomatic recognition: Russia's move opens new horizons for Afghanistan

In the ever-evolving landscape of international relations, there are rare moments that not only shift political trajectories but also lay the groundwork for long-term economic transformation. The recent recognition of the Islamic Emirate by Russia is one such historic moment—one that could significantly shape Afghanistan's political stability, economic development, and international stature.

Russia, a major global and regional power, has officially announced the establishment of formal relations with the current Afghan administration. While this move carries strong political symbolism, it also holds deep economic significance. It is a clear departure from the isolationist approach many countries have taken and signals a willingness to resolve regional and global issues through engagement and cooperation rather than sanctions and exclusion.

This development has been widely welcomed by Afghanistan's private sector, investors, and economic analysts, who see it as the beginning of a new economic chapter for the country.

The recognition offers not only legitimacy to the Afghan government but also opens new doors for trade, investment, and infrastructural development. It is a sign that powerful regional players are ready to accept and work with the new reality on the ground in Afghanistan.

Currently, trade between Afghanistan and Russia stands at an estimated 300 million Afghanis annually—a modest figure considering the potential of both economies. However, this could change dramatically in the near future. With official diplomatic ties now in place, opportunities for cooperation in key sectors such as energy, engineering, transportation, agriculture, and mining are expected to grow rapidly.

Economic experts have long emphasized the interdependence of political legitimacy and economic progress. In a world of interconnected markets and shared resources, no country can afford complete self-reliance.

Mutual cooperation is no longer optional—it is essential. Russia's recognition of Afghanistan sends a powerful message to the international community that working with the Islamic Emirate is not only possible, but can also lead to positive and productive outcomes based on mutual respect and shared interests.

While many Western countries remain cautious and hesitant in their approach to Afghanistan, Russia's move may serve as a catalyst for others to reassess their positions. If more nations follow suit, it could result in greater political legitimacy for the Afghan government, improved access to international markets, and a significant boost in foreign investment.

Analysts argue that this step is more than a diplomatic milestone—it is the foundation for an economic transformation. It signals the potential for expanded exports, increased employment opportunities, and the launch of critical infrastructure projects. With sustained cooperation and strategic planning, Afghanistan can transition from an aid-dependent state to a self-sufficient economy rooted in trade and investment.

Moreover, the Islamic Emirate now carries the responsibility to capitalize on this opportunity wisely. A strong focus on transparency, investor protection, legal reforms, and inclusive economic policies will be critical in ensuring that foreign engagement translates into tangible benefits for the Afghan people.

In conclusion, Russia's formal recognition of the Islamic Emirate is not just a political endorsement—it is a gateway to economic growth and international engagement. It offers Afghanistan a renewed opportunity to reintroduce itself to the world—not as a battleground of instability, but as a country ready to stand on its own feet, partner with global powers, and shape a future defined by resilience, self-reliance, and sustainable development.

With careful strategy and national commitment, this door to opportunity can become a cornerstone of a prosperous new era. **S. Nasir Watandost**

THE KABUL TIMES DAILY
Saratan 28-1404 Saturday 19 July 2025 INo: 94-Vol: LXII

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SPORTS

Afghan snooker player faces defeat in Bahrain International Snooker Championship

Afghan snooker player Saleh Mohammad Mohammadi faced a 4–2 defeat against his opponent Mohammad Al Joker in the Masters category of the ongoing Bahrain International Snooker Championship.

Despite putting up a strong performance, Mohammadi could not overcome the experienced Emirati player in this round of the competition.

The Bahrain International Snooker Championship has brought together players from 25 different countries, making it a highly competitive and prestigious event in the snooker calendar.

Hosted by Bahrain, the tournament features matches in both the Masters and 6-Red ball categories, attracting top-tier talent from across the globe.

Afghanistan is being represented in the tournament by two players: Saleh Mohammad Mohammadi and Ahmad Nauman Nauman. Both athletes have shown determination and skill, showcasing Afghanistan's growing presence in the international snooker scene.

Although Mohammadi's loss in the Masters category is a setback, his participation highlights the country's steady progress in cue sports and the commitment of Afghan players to compete at the global level. His match against Al Joker was closely contested, reflecting Mohammadi's competitive spirit and tactical gameplay.

Afghan snooker fans continue to support their players and hope for a stronger comeback in upcoming matches.

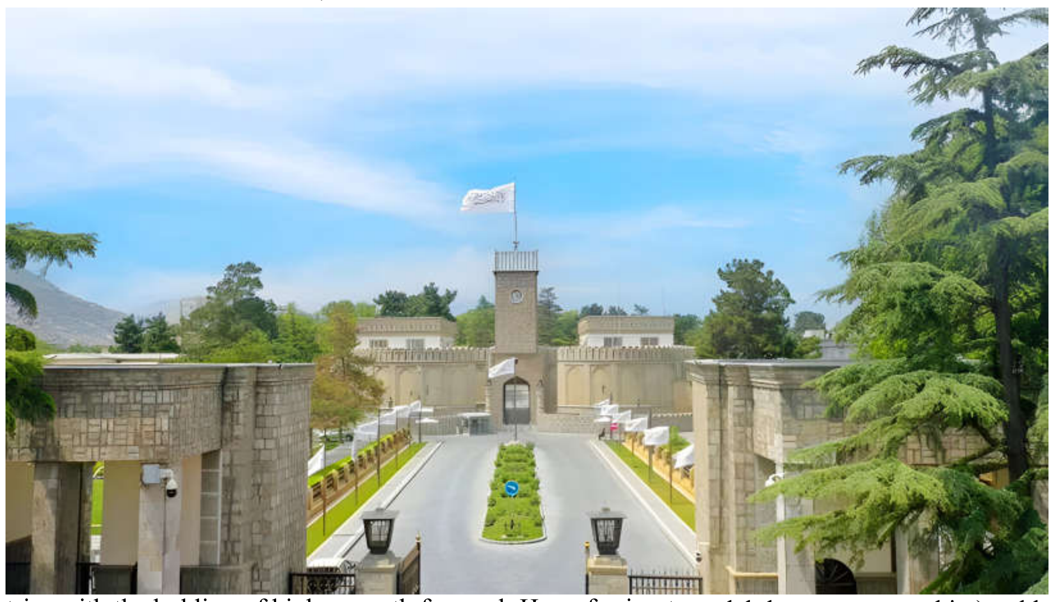
Meanwhile, attention now turns to the 6-Red ball category, where both Afghan players aim to perform well and make their mark.

This participation is not only important for sports but also for promoting Afghanistan's positive image through international sporting events.

The Kabul Times

PM Hassan Akhund meets Uzbek Foreign Minister, hails bilateral ties

KABUL: Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, the Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate, in a meeting with Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister Bakhtiyor Saidov, described the relations between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan as historical and longstanding, Arg said in a statement on Friday.



The meeting was also attended by Ismatulla Irgashev, Special Representative of the President of Uzbekistan for Afghanistan, and Afghanistan's acting Foreign Minister, Mawlavi Amir Khan Muttaqi, the statement said.

Welcoming the Uzbek delegation, Mullah Hassan described Afghanistan-Uzbekistan relations as historic and deeply rooted and emphasized the importance of strengthening bilateral cooperation in regional connectivity and trade, according to the statement.

Meanwhile, Saidov conveyed the greetings and best wishes of Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to the Afghan Prime Minister and the people of Afghanistan.

"This day is marked as a historic moment for both countries with the holding of high-level political consultations and the signing of the trilateral agreement on the feasibility study for the Trans-Afghan Railway," the statement quoted Saidov as saying.

Saidov commended Afghanistan's continued efforts toward political stability, economic progress, and the well-being of its people, calling these achievements a sign that the country is on a positive path forward. He, referring to the positive engagement between regional countries and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, added that Uzbekistan has supported the Afghan government at the international level and will continue its support. The Uzbek Foreign Minister also thanked the Islamic Emirate for its special attention to the reconstruction of the shrine of Muhammad ibn Ismail Imam al-Bukhari (may Allah have mercy on him), adding that this figure is a source of pride not only for Uzbekistan and Afghanistan but for the entire Islamic world.

He expressed hope that this cooperation would continue in the future and officially invited Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, the Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, to visit Uzbekistan.

The Kabul Times

Cricket returns to Olympics after 128 years, set for LA 2028

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has confirmed that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has officially approved the inclusion of cricket in the 2028 Olympic Games, which will be held in Los Angeles, United States.

According to the ICC, cricket will feature in the Twenty20 (T20) format, a shorter and more dynamic version of the game.

The 2028 Olympic cricket tournament will include both men's and women's competitions, with six teams participating in each category.

This move marks a significant milestone for the sport, opening up the Olympic platform to one of the world's most popular games, particularly in South Asia, Australia, the UK, and parts of Africa and the Caribbean. The inclusion of cricket in the 2028 Olympics reflects growing global interest in the sport and comes after years of lobbying by the ICC and cricket-loving nations.

This decision is also seen as a strategic step to expand the Olympic audience, particularly in cricket-dominant countries such as India and Pakistan.

It is worth noting that cricket last appeared in the Olympics over a century ago.

The sport made its sole Olympic appearance in 1900 during the Paris Games, where only one match was played

between Great Britain and France. With its return in 2028, cricket aims to captivate a broader global audience and potentially become a permanent fixture in future Olympic programs.

The announcement has been met with enthusiasm by cricket boards and fans worldwide, as it offers a rare opportunity to showcase the sport on one of the biggest stages in international athletics.

The 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles promise to be historic for cricket, potentially setting the stage for its sustained presence in the Olympic movement.

The Kabul Times

Over 100 snooker club owners attend reform implementation meeting in Kabul

A major meeting was held in Kabul bringing together more than 100 snooker club owners to discuss the implementation of newly established reform principles for snooker clubs across the country. The session was jointly organized by the General Directorate of Physical Education and Sports, the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, and the National Snooker Federation.

The gathering aimed to ensure the enforcement of reform measures developed to align snooker clubs with Islamic values, promote a positive environment for youth, and uphold social norms. Key attendees included Gulabuddin Khpalwak, Sports Advisor to the General Directorate of Physical Education and Sports and Technical Deputy of the Federation; Waheedullah Asghari, President of the Snooker Federation; as well as snooker players and club owners from Kabul.

In his opening remarks, Gulabuddin Khpalwak welcomed participants and emphasized the importance of the new reforms. He stated that the principles are designed to promote a healthy, Islamic-compliant atmosphere for young people and to strengthen the role of snooker in supporting social harmony. These reform policies represent a model of collaboration between the Directorate of Invitation and Guidance, the Snooker Federation, and the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. During the meeting, club owners pledged their full commitment to upholding these principles and confirmed that they would continue their operations under the new guidelines.

This meeting marks a significant step toward structuring recreational spaces in a way that aligns with national values and youth welfare goals. **The Kabul Times**

Hunger-stricken Gazans face bullets in...

From P3

Many are urging the International Criminal Court (ICC) to consider the deliberate obstruction of aid and targeted killings of aid seekers as potential war crimes under international law.

"Starvation is being used as a weapon, and this is a crime against humanity," one humanitarian law expert stated. "No government, regardless of its alliances or security concerns, has the right to deny food, water, and safety to a civilian population under siege."

Despite growing pressure, little action has been taken by Western governments, especially the United States, to hold Israel accountable for these actions. Critics argue that U.S. support for GHF, combined with its diplomatic shielding of Israel at the United Nations, makes it complicit in the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe.

As the crisis deepens, voices from within Gaza are pleading with the world not to turn a blind eye.

"We are not asking for political favors," said a local aid worker. "We are asking to live. To eat. To not be killed for standing in line for bread."

Unless immediate and concrete steps are taken to restore neutral, accountable, and safe humanitarian operations in Gaza, the death toll will continue to rise—alongside the moral cost of global inaction.

Romal

Job creation for skilled returnees should...

From P3

Moreover, targeted job placement initiatives, vocational training upgrades, and small business support schemes are being developed in partnership with national and international organizations to ensure that returnees are not left behind.

This approach not only honors their experience but transforms it into a powerful engine for self-reliance, economic recovery, and long-term prosperity.

What should be done by the IEA to provide returnees with job opportunities and utilize their expertise in the country's development and reconstruction?

To effectively provide returnees with job opportunities and utilize their expertise in Afghanistan's development and reconstruction, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) should consider the following strategic steps:

1. Skills Assessment & Comprehensive Registration:

The IEA should establish dedicated centers at key border crossings and provincial hubs to thoroughly assess and document the skills, qualifications, and professional experiences of returning migrants. This process would involve interviews, practical evaluations, and the creation of a detailed centralized database.

Such a registry will enable efficient matching of returnees' expertise with sector-specific needs, ensuring that human resources are optimally allocated across the country.

2. Prioritized Employment in Public and National Development Projects:

Returnees with technical and professional skills should be given priority in recruitment for national reconstruction efforts. This includes employment in large-scale public works such as road construction, irrigation networks, housing developments, renewable energy projects, and telecommunications infrastructure. By channeling skilled labor into these critical projects, the IEA can accelerate development while providing meaningful employment opportunities to returnees.

3. Support and Incentives for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):

Many returnees have entrepreneurial potential and practical skills suited for small businesses. The IEA should create supportive policies such as access to microfinance loans, tax breaks, business development training, and simplified registration processes.

Focus should be on sectors like agriculture, livestock, handicrafts, construction, and trade, which are vital for local economies.

This will encourage returnees to become active economic contributors and generate jobs for others.

4. Vocational Training, Upskilling, and Certification Programs:

To better integrate returnees into the evolving labor market, the government should launch vocational and skills development programs tailored to current market demands. These programs can provide certifications recognized nationally and internationally, which will enhance employability. Special attention should be given to emerging sectors such as renewable energy, information technology, healthcare, and construction management.

5. Provincial and Community-Level Job Creation Initiatives:

Recognizing the diverse needs of Afghanistan's provinces, the IEA should collaborate with local authorities to design community-specific employment schemes.

These could include rural infrastructure improvements, agriculture extension services, and small-scale industry projects that both create jobs for returnees and support broader community development. Such localized initiatives will also help reduce urban migration and balance economic growth across regions.

6. Engagement of Private Sector, NGOs, and International Partners:

The government should actively promote partnerships with private companies, non-governmental organizations, and international development agencies. These collaborations can enhance returnee employment through joint ventures, training programs, and direct hiring in sectors like education, health services, and technical trades. Leveraging the expertise and resources of these actors will expand opportunities and improve program effectiveness.

7. Continuous Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Policy Making:

A dedicated task force or monitoring unit should be established to track the progress of returnee employment initiatives. Regular data collection, impact assessments, and stakeholder feedback mechanisms will allow the IEA to measure success and identify challenges promptly.

This evidence-based approach will enable timely adjustments to policies and programs, ensuring they remain responsive to returnees' needs and economic conditions.

By systematically implementing the above steps, the Islamic Emirate can transform the challenge of returnee reintegration into a powerful engine for Afghanistan's economic recovery, social cohesion, and long-term sustainable development.

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